

The Problem with All Stars Podcast Response

Posted on December 5, 2023

Response Paper | (Podcast)

The primary source that I will be responding to in this article is the episode of the “WorkLife with Adam Grant” podcast entitled “The Problem with All-Stars”. Adam Grant, in this episode, talks with Shane Battier about how having a complete “All-Stars” squad may be disastrous and the traits that go into forming a superstars’ squad of “too many chiefs” might wind up being a nightmare. The essential elements after listening to the podcast in a nutshell are team composition, taking responsibilities, and task characteristics that act as a glue to help keep the team together. In relation to these particular elements, Battier recalls his duty on the Miami Heat, where he was supposed to act as glue with the knowledge of the court regarding how he would play a specific position on the team amongst numerous players. He was also known for demonstrating and establishing his value for being a defensive annoyance on the court in the Miami Heat. Battier’s approach to improving his defensive play on the court from the beginning of the game has the benefit of ensuring players know what is expected from them as a squad and that not just his or any team leader’s numbers matter for potentially boosting the efficiency of the team members.

Grant, in the podcast “The Problem with All-Stars”, reflects on the disappointing fact that players’ ability to work as a cohesive unit in an All-Stars squad is compromised because the team of superstars often fail to live up to expectations as a well-integrated whole. In other words, All-Star players compete for dominance, so the overall performance suffers because every top-tier employee jockey for the high position by showcasing too much talent to establish intragroup standing. Taking on roles is accepting ownership of one’s actions, reactions, intentions, decisions, and consequences for mistakes and failures, both bad and good. However, if superstars do not take on their roles and just compete for dominance, then irresponsibility comes into play, which can manifest in a lack of accountability for one’s decisions, actions, and intentions. There are many roles that superstars perform, including tasks and maintenance roles in teams. Some people help the team perform certain assigned tasks, whereas others relate to maintaining team relationships. Superstars taking on task contributors’ roles propose new ideas and solutions to problems, suggest potential procedures, and point out the benefits of certain tasks to their teammates.

Contrary to task coordinators and initiators, superstars taking on task maintenance roles act as encouragers and energizers to praise good points inhabited by the team members and stimulate the team to action, leading to a perfect closure. Superstar players sometimes have trouble bonding and communicating with the rest of the team members because of their desire to stand out. This desire leads to creating a somewhat hostile environment where top-tier players’ excellence creates a gap between him and the rest of the team members(Grant). Moreover, the members of the team start

withholding resources and information from the superstar players as a form of discrete victimization because A-players always want credit for their services and fall into a toxic cloud of hyper-aggressive behaviour in their professional space. The managerial approval always leaves All-Stars emotionally separated from the rest of the team, although they drive performance because of their hard work, motivation, performance, and dedication.

Humility

Another significant feature discussed in the podcast is infighting because of the “lot of egos” of All-Stars, which suggests that a complete squad of superstars occupying almost every position is not always the greatest idea (Grant). If there are too many All-Stars in a squad, the team positions will be less likely to be diverse in order to optimize decent composition and dependency within the squad. To overcome this problem, humility is the element that a star requires to hang onto his dignity as a commitment to keep learning and improving. Humility, as Grant refers to it, is having the sense of “self-awareness” to learn and know about what they are good at and what their shortcomings on the court are. Grant further sheds light on the significance of humility, stating that when the players have it, they do not run after individual spotlight but rather strategies to help the team win. The reason why humility helps achieve a decent composition of a squad is that players with humility are more likely to play to their strengths. Moreover, decent composition, as Adam Grant suggests, depends on the behaviours and skills of productive members of the team on the court, where each member must offer their technical expertise.

Humility and leadership are essential in a game, as they help one extend more empathy to others, and a team will benefit greatly in the end. A leader who has the ability to tie his self-worth to his existence views the rest of his teammates as human beings and does not run after material things, gains, or his job. Moreover, a leader or a team member who is humble admits to his shortcomings, celebrates the collective team, focuses on the strengths of the teammates, and is open to feedback. The reason why humility is essential in a team is that a humble team leader creates humble followers who collectively create a positive team that focuses on group goals and better performance as well as greater collaboration. Practically speaking, a leader with humility is seen as a role model who yields a high-performing team.

A humble leader creates a humble and successful team that acts as a role model for his followers to practice humility in or outside the court. A successful leader with humility causes people to choose to perform at their best through different effective strategies, such as being open to learning and letting the other person shine no matter how excellent you are in the court. Firstly, every teammate should be allowed to have the answer while being open to learning from everyone on the team. Show a sincere interest in what is going on in every member’s professional as well as personal life, regardless of their titles. Secondly, a team is not about an individual leader and his accomplishments. It is about preparing team members for success and then stepping out of their way to draw out what was left. Let every member of the team shine by giving them equal opportunity to be the star.

Humility is difficult for the team leader to show because one feels inferior to others, although it is a hidden ingredient in great teams (Grant). It is to think very low of oneself and one's opinion, which is considered a sign of weakness. A person who is humble automatically infers that he does not have enough confidence to show his teammates that he is good at something. Besides, a leader thinks that when humility makes him explicit in the eyes of others, the sense of humility will no longer remain because if humility announces itself, the feeling becomes reversed pride.

Every single player in a team is essential to achieve the team's goals, like a valuable piece of the chain. Everyone in the team needs each other to take their role in that chain seriously. Considering each and every member of the team lets the squad improve efficiency and performance. Thus, it is vital for a team leader to let every member have the idea that he is the most important person in the team. Remember that every teammate in the team, irrespective of caste, colour, creed, or nationality, is vital to the overall success and performance of the team. Operating in this way helps a leader boost his team's performance and individual dedication to the task in order to make the team succeed at the highest level. It is likely the way an ingenious leader will experience much more of teammates' contribution and overall performance and success on the court (Grant). Contrary to a person who takes on task and maintenance roles in the team, a toxic team member can cast a pall over the team, and the impacts can be devastating. Such toxic members do not uphold the values of the team for any good reason and can ruin the atmosphere of the whole team. However, the true mettle of a superstar and the team is tested by how the team deals with violated expectations. Therefore, an A-star member of the team must know how to use his own discretion in dealing with negative team members. Changing the behaviour, intentions, and actions of toxic people is a necessary act for a team of All-Stars as it would help change the attitudes of the rest of the team members as a thriving team by letting their voices be heard.

In a nutshell, prospective team members are the gateway to success and are crucial for maintaining a positive team culture through utilizing the team's cooperation and collaboration skills. To achieve team bonding, better performance, the accomplishment of goals, and great team outcomes, a leader should not let his team members lose sight of how each member contributes to the overall success of the team.

Works Cited

Grant, WorkLife with Adam. *WorkLife with Adam Grant: The Problem with All-Stars* / TED Talk. https://www.ted.com/talks/worklife_with_adam_grant_the_problem_with_all_stars/transcript. Accessed 2 Nov. 2022.